

and west to the arid and burning  
plains of the  
south-east,

The treason had the hoped-for  
result; the siege  
had to be abandoned, and on the 28th  
of July the  
Christians retired from Damascus,  
Nur-ed-dfn  
occupied the city as they fell back, and  
the sole  
advantage remained with him. The  
Second  
Crusade therefore failed at all points,  
and left the  
power of the Atabegs still unchecked.

The autumn and winter of x 148 and  
the spring  
of 1149 saw numbers of the greatest  
princes of the  
West returning home by sea. In  
September,  
Conrad left Acre, and landing at  
Thessalonica  
accepted Manuel's invitation to spend  
the winter  
at Constantinople, At the same time  
he received  
with anger the news of Roger's attack  
upon his  
ally, and the failure of the Crusade  
inclined him  
all the more to seek glory in Italy for  
his tarnished  
sword, He entered, therefore, into  
the most  
binding engagement with Manuel;  
the Sicilian  
was to be overwhelmed by a double  
attack, and  
envoys were despatched to win over  
Pisa and  
Venice, In February, 1149, Conrad  
departed  
for Germany, touching only for a  
moment upon  
Italian soil at Ancona,

Manuel now came in person to the  
of Corfu; the Greeks entered the

fortress, but the  
Norman troops retired to the acropolis,  
which was  
of such a height that "the eye could  
scarcely  
measure it"; from here they poured  
down  
stones and showers of darts "like fire  
showered